COMMONSENSE IDEAS for a STRONGER AMERICA with Senator Joe Manchin

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ACHIEVE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND REDUCE UNNECESSARY REGULATIONS

One of the greatest threats facing our country and our economy is America's dependence on oil from countries that want to harm the United States. Senator Manchin believes that one of the most commonsense steps we can take for the good of our country is to achieve energy independence within the next generation.

In 1972, America was 28 percent dependent on foreign oil. But today, we are more than 50 percent dependent. Over the last four decades, America has witnessed the largest transfer of wealth from our country to other nations – all because we have failed to achieve energy independence. For the sake of our economy, for our jobs, for our nation's future, now is the time to work together – as Democrats and Republicans – and chart a new course that will free America from our dependence on energy that comes from countries that wish to do us harm as a nation.

Not only is energy independence critical for our security, using our domestic resources will create good paying jobs today that can help support a family and will help build towns and cities all across this nation. These are jobs that can't be outsourced.

State officials working to attract cracker projects to West Virginia as a part of the development natural gas extraction from the Marcellus Shale, for example, have estimated that West Virginia could expect more than 2,300 direct jobs from construction of a cracker plant to convert ethane, a by-product of Marcellus drilling, to ethylene, a chemical used as stock feed in the chemical industry. Estimates for the number of indirect jobs that could come from one plant top 3,500. Business' investment in the plants themselves would be at least $1.5 to $2 billion.

The American Chemical Council has offered even more detailed projections: that about $3.2 billion would also be invested in the downstream chemical facilities that would make products like dyes, paints, coatings and plastics. That investment would generate $7 billion in additional chemical industry output in West Virginia. The council also estimates about 12,000 jobs would be created in the chemical industry and throughout the supply chain in West Virginia, moving the state from the 23rd largest chemical producing state to the 13th largest.

Senator Manchin believes a real plan for energy independence must use all of America's domestic resources – oil, coal, natural gas, geothermal, nuclear, biomass, wind, solar, hydro – anything and everything we have. Senator Manchin also believes that in order for America to achieve energy independence, the federal government cannot be in the business of picking winners and losers. Today, we see government bureaucrats tilting the scales to favor one energy resource over all the others. We see the EPA pass more and more regulations that are paralyzing investment, raising costs and killing jobs.

Senator Manchin has always said that there needs to be a balance between the regulations that are necessary to protect our environment and the economic impact these regulations have on investment and growth. Instead of a balance, this EPA is consistently overreaching its statutory authority, regulating what has not been legislated. As a result, they're killing jobs across this country and holding American back from achieving energy independence.

In order to put America on a path to energy independence and reduce the economic burden of unnecessary regulations, Senator Manchin has sponsored or cosponsored many pieces of commonsense legislation, including:

- **The EPA Fair Play Act of 2011**, which was Senator Manchin's first piece of legislation, and would prevent the EPA from retroactively vetoing permits – which the agency did with southern West Virginia's Spruce Mine.

- **The REINS ACT** – to rein in out-of-control agencies like the EPA and require Congressional approval for any law, rule or regulation that costs our economy 100 million dollars or more.

- **The American Alternative Fuels Act of 2011**, which would break down barriers to alternative energy fuels, including fuels that come from coal, biomass, algae and waste – and would allow the federal government to start using those fuels.

- **The Cement Sector Regulatory Relief Act of 2011**, which directs the EPA to re-propose and finalize a more reasonable Cement MACT rule that gives the industry enough time to comply with new emission standards.

- **The EPA Regulatory Relief Act of 2011,** which would delay the effective date of Boiler MACT and direct EPA to make the rule achievable for existing boilers.

Background on West Virginia's contributions to America's energy portfolio:

Coal: West Virginia coal current accounts for 50 percent of US exported coal, which makes up a very large part of our economy. West Virginia accounts for about 13 percent of total coal production in the United States. In 2010, coal generated 45 percent of our nation's electricity.

Natural Gas: West Virginia presently has about 262 billion cubic feet (Bcf) of underground working storage capacity of natural gas. This is the 2nd largest storage capability on the East Coast. Natural gas produced from the Marcellus Shale in West Virginia has risen to about 12 percent of the total state gas production in 2009. This increased from 1 percent in 2005. The northern panhandle of West Virginia has been classified as part of Marcellus Shale's rich gas area. One-third of the gas extracted from this area is considered wet gas, meaning it contains considerable amounts of ethane.

Biomass: West Virginia is the 2nd most forested state per capita in the lower 48 states. One of the largest charcoal producing facilities in the United States is located in Parsons. Arundo Donax (Giant Cane), indigenous to Asia, is a biomass crop currently being test grown in West Virginia to potentially be used in the process of creating bio-degradable plastics.

Wind: Wind energy production in West Virginia has gone from 66 MW in 2007 to 430 MW in 2010, an increase of more than 500 percent. Another 526 MW has been permitted or in development. West Virginia has one of the largest on-shore operating wind farms on the east coast, Nedpower, at 264 MW. West Virginia currently has more than 1,000 MW of undeveloped commercial wind potential on privately owned lands.

Hydro: West Virginia has some of the oldest hydro power generating facilities in the nation, two of which are more than 100 years old. There are currently 327 MW of hydro power operating in West Virginia. Preliminary permitting exists in the Federal Energy Regulation Commission's database for an additional 630 MW. 450MW account for a potential pump storage system to be located in West Virginia.